The Berrien County Historical Association

The Docket

The History Center at Courthouse Square

February 2020 | Volume 36, Issue 2

BCHA Events - February

January 15 through February 29
***Wish You Were Here* Exhibit**
Sheriff's Residence, Free Admission
Wish You Were Here will feature postcards that showcase familiar locations around the county and some will give us a glimpse at the inside thoughts of Berrien's many residents.

Through February 20th
Guest Curators Applications Being Accepted
A Cup of Sugar Exhibit
Residents, businesses, and community groups of Berrien County are invited to share their food, baking, and cooking traditions in our new A Community Curated exhibit. To reserve your space, call Rhiannon at 269-471-1202 or email rcizon@berrienhistory.org

February 1st through 29th
Can You Save? Sale
On the Docket Books & Gifts
The BCHA is celebrating National Canned Food Month in a unique way. Bring in at least one canned or non-perishable item in February and receive 10% off in the gift shop. Members save more with a 20% discount! All donated items will be given to a local food pantry.

February 13
***TNC Talk*: Edna and Arline, 6:30 p.m.**
1839 Courthouse, Free admission
BCHA Curator Sandra Spiering will explore how postcards have been a large part of our language of love

February 23
Meriendas on the Courthouse: African-

An Now a Word from the Director

Love is the most important thing in the world, but baseball is pretty good, too.

Yogi Berra

My dear friends,

Just the other day, I was on the phone for nearly three hours talking about vintage baseball. Why? Because I got what I think is a really good idea and I decided that the best course of action was to pursue it. Three hours later, I taped to the wall the tentative first program and exhibit for 2021. And yes, its about baseball. As details solidify in the next few months, I'll talk more about it, but suffice to say, I am quite excited!

Regardless, things are moving along here rather smoothly at the museum and 2020 has been good to us so far. January was very successful with our newly revamped TNC Talk series kicking off, the introduction of our Merienda series just a few days ago, and our first exhibit put our new hanging system to the test and it passed beautifully.

On the back end of things, Tara has been working diligently to import and update our new database and we're finding all sort of ways to make your experiences all the better and easier. There is still some kinks in the system and we have a lot of things to update, but being able to provide a better experience for our members has been Tara's number one work resolution this year and she's been killing it!

Sandra and our new volunteer Vicki are

American Folk Traditions, 2:30 p.m.
1839 Courthouse, $5 public, $2 members
Our new Merienda series explores the heritage of the world through music and this month we explore the rich world of African-American folk traditions. With sounds that helped shaped numerous genres, the world of African American music spans geography and time.

Partner Events - February

March 20
Berrien County Genealogical Society
Spring Genealogy Lock-in
Maud Preston Palenske Memorial Library
St. Joseph
The BCGS is hosting is spring after-hours genealogical research session. Assistance will be available by members of the BCGS and refreshments will be served. To learn more, please call 269-983-7167 to register.

March 28
Kalamazoo Valley Genealogical Society
Annual Allen Cty Library Bus Trip
$35.00 per person, not including meals
The KVGS once again is hosting their annual trip to the Allen County Public Library trip to use their genealogy room. The bus leaves from three locations and the trip will be the whole day. To learn more and to sign up, please visit their website at mikvgs.org.

making headway on our artifact donation backlog and the change in Sandra's office has been impressive. Vicki is currently working through our YWCA collection, cataloging for later imputing and storage. Some of the photos she has found are aggressively 90s. We made some very bad fashion choices, y'all.

And we're excited to see our board grow by one member as Diane Shmitchger was voted on to the board this past Tuesday during our first board meeting of the year. This New Buffalo native is crazy about historic preservation and we're excited to have her bring this passion to the board.

And me? Well, I have a finger in a dozen pies and a couple of toes as well. Which is the life of a director and I'm enjoying every minute of it. Our previously penciled in calendar is now more colorful as speakers confirm, partnerships are developed, and these bold ideas that strike me in my bed at 3:00 a.m. (which is pretty par for the course when it comes to my brain) are becoming an exciting reality.

In a month celebrating love, everyday I love this job more and more.

Historically yours,

A Curated Corner: Put an Oar on It

The inside of the canoe, where students signed their name. Among the ones we can read include Warren Shultz and an E. Hermax. Some are just last names like Skinner.

By Sandra Spiering, Curator

The archives and collections here at the BCHA are home to artifacts that are familiar - milk jugs, wooden planes, shoes, the occasional creepy doll. Others are not so common and as we all know, those tell the best stories.

One unique object I recently found while preparing for an exhibit was a small, hand-carved wooden canoe. The interior is dotted with names, written in every nook and cranny, and many multi-colored ribbons are wound throughout the sides.

According to our records, the donor was a former teacher at Berrien Springs High School and donated the

The exterior of the canoe. Most of the ribbons were written in black ink, making it easy to read, but some of the inks have faded faster than others, rendering them difficult to read.

artifact to us several years ago. I learned that this canoe was part of a special tradition of the staff of the BSHS yearbook, *The Canoe*. The when the eponymous book was finished, the students would take turns signing it and attached a new ribbon with the year written on it. The dates on the canoe range from 1916 to 1956, although some dates are more faded than others.

For fifty years, students at BSHS carried on this small, yet important tradition. In turn, they created a shared memory with those who came before and for many, those who came afterwards. Had this artifact not been donated to us, then the stories and memories of this tradition (and history) would have faded away.

Instead, it's part of our collection and we are helping to keep that part of BSHS and Berrien Springs alive for future generations to explore. You can currently see the canoe on display in our 'Wish You Were Here' exhibit, located in the Sheriff's Residence.

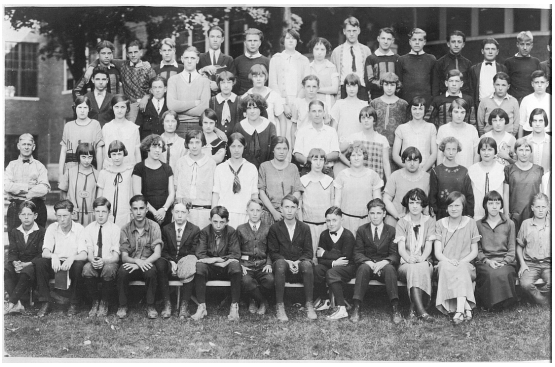
Into the Collection Vaults: Rah Rah Rah!

Each month, we dive deep into the vaults to share pictures and stories from our communities and their histories. We're continuing the school trend with four photos from around the county.

The class of 1910 at Niles High School pose for their class photo. Quite a fashionable class with the clean lines of the dresses and the wide brimmed hat.

The thirteen members of the Coloma High School football team in 1924 have all the youthful swagger only boys in their teens seem to have.

Some of our football players may be in this Class of 1924 photo, also from Coloma



The Buchanan High School Class of 1924 was much larger than Coloma's (this picture is cut off), but the casualness of the photo give us a great glimpse into what

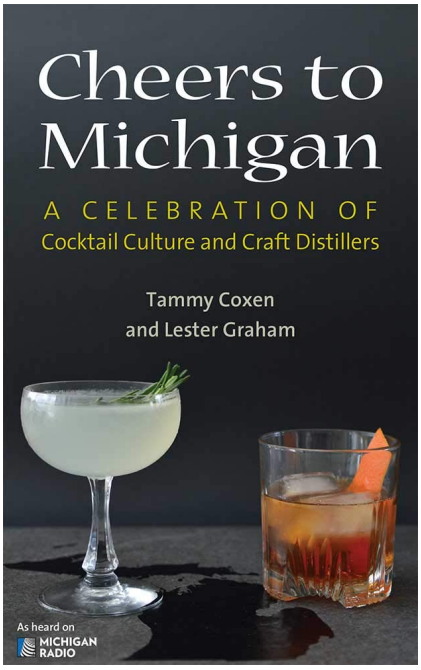
High School. Of the three class photos, this is the most formal, with boys and girls dressed similar for an impressive effect.

teens thought were fashionable threads during that time.

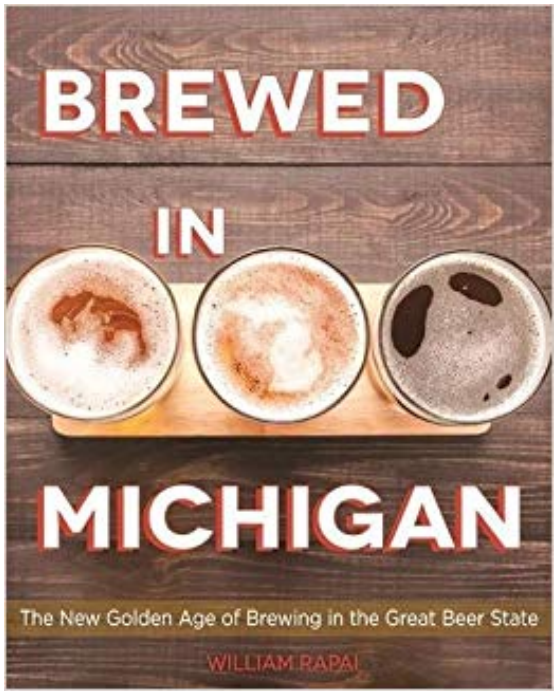
On the Docket Books & Gifts: Raise Your Glass

by Tara Velez, Museum Operations Coordinator

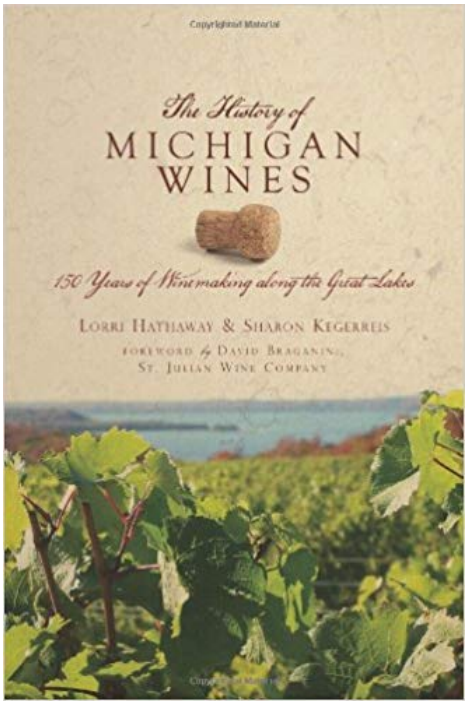
This month you will find all over Berrien County and west Michigan fests celebrating wine, beer, and spirits. With the cold weather keeping everyone indoors, it's no wonder these highly social events happen quite often this time of year. But if you're not sure where to start, we suggest stopping by the gift shop to pick up one of these titles to help you out!



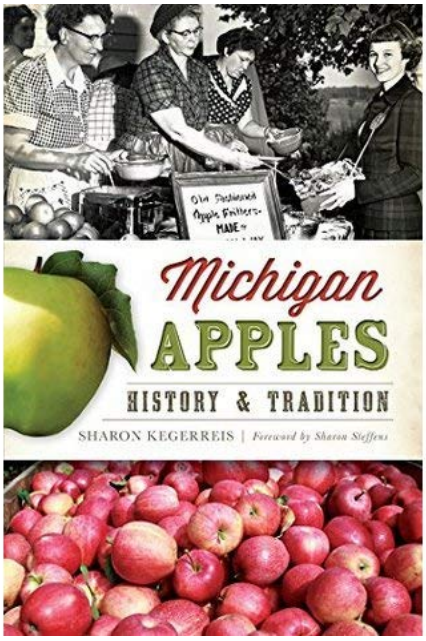
Cheers to Michigan: A CELEBRATION of Cocktail Culture and Craft Distillers



Brewed in Michigan: The New Golden Age of Brewing in the Great Beer State



The History of Michigan Wines: 150 Years



Michigan Apples: History & Tradition

Okay, so this is a cheat. But you can learn

of Winemaking along the Great Lakes

about apples to make your own hard cider!

Friends and Partners

Thank you to the follow people and organizations who have made this month's programs a reality!

Support our Organization

Learn More About Us!

Department of MUSIC Andrews University

Meet the Berrien County Historical Association

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Tara Velez, Museum Operations Coordinator
Lori Fedore, Complex Caretaker

Our Mission Statement

The Mission of the BCHA is to collect, preserve and interpret the history of Berrien County through exhibits, tours, publications, and educational and community outreach programs for public benefit.

About the Berrien County Historical Association

The History Center at Courthouse Square is operated by the Berrien County Historical Association and is located in Berrien Springs, MI. Since 1967, the BCHA has operated the five buildings located on Courthouse Square, including the 1839 Courthouse, an 1830s log cabin, a recreated blacksmith forge, an 1870s sheriff's residence, and the 1860s county records building. For more information about our exhibits and programs, contact the BCHA at 269-471-1202. Find us ***online***, on ***Facebook***, and on ***Instagram***.